



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

and the control by national legislatures of the appointment and instruction of national delegates to the international conferences.

(11) To promote amity and mutual understanding between the oriental and occidental peoples, and to proceed with all possible means and speed to conciliate the people of Russia, China, India, Afghanistan, the Central Powers, and Turkey, in order that these nations or countries may not form, against the western powers, a hostile coalition which might menace the peace of the world.

The President would be authorized and directed, by invitations to be sent out by him during the month of June, 1921, to invite each of the aforesaid states to send five delegates, to be selected from the organized labor bodies of each of said states, to an international conference on labor to be held at Washington at the same time with the international conferences of the states and the assembly of the colonies, protectorates, and dependencies, said international conference on labor to sit concurrently with but separate from and independent of, the international conference of the states and the assembly of the colonies, protectorates, and dependencies. This

international conference on labor may send communications to and advise with the other two aforesaid conferences. It shall be the function of the international conference on labor to consider and deliberate upon all questions affecting the general welfare of labor throughout the world and to make recommendations to the international conference of the states and to the assembly of the colonies, protectorates, and dependencies of measures which, in the opinion of the international conference on labor, would tend to promote the establishment of general justice, the assurance of the general tranquillity, the promotion of the general welfare, and the securing generally of the blessings of liberty to the peoples now living, and to their posterity.

It provides for no super-government. All of its processes would be advisory and the authority of the conferences would be limited by their assent and agreement to the purposes which have been enumerated. As I have already intimated, there is no theoretical reason why the whole world might not be federated. When they shall all be dedicated to the purposes of the United States, there might well be a United States of the world.

A World Association Impractical Under Present Conditions

By HON. JAMES M. BECK
Of the New York Bar

I WISH I thought that the problem of an effective world organization was as easy as many people seem to think it is. They are like the student who claimed that he had discovered the nature of the aurora borealis but unfortunately had forgotten

the details of the discovery. To prevent war, a "consummation devoutly to be wished" but as yet not realized in the history of the world, something more is necessary than to perfect an organic combination of the nations of the world. Peace by this method has

been an illusion vainly followed by various nations for many centuries, and while I am quite willing to agree that the fact that in the thousands of preceding years it has not been accomplished does not necessarily imply that it may not be in the future, yet the present results of the last attempt of the civilized nations of the world to perfect a League of Nations has not impressed me with the present feasibility of the project.

IS THE WORLD READY FOR A LEAGUE OF NATIONS?

The project of a League of Nations, is as the Kingdom of God—it “cometh not with observation”—it is something that can never be created by rhapsodies of words, by lengthy parchments or by red seals. It can not be imposed upon the world from above. It must come from the very depths of humanity and be evolved out of social conditions. In other words, all attempts by an artificial covenant or agreement between nations, in the past and at the present hour, to impose peace upon the world have hitherto failed because they are premature. One essential to an effective world organization is therefore the avoidance of pre-maturity. The foundation and superstructure must be built slowly and patiently.

To those who think it is so easy to construct a world organization, I commend an easier task. Try to get all the Protestant Churches of the world to iron out their differences and agree upon a common system of church government; and then when that is done, try to get the Roman Catholic Church to agree to merge; and when that is done, get the Greek Church to join the unified church; and when that is done get the Jewish Church to combine with the three I have mentioned. Then get the Moslems to come into the great combine; then the Buddhists and

Confucians to contribute to the common harmony; and when all these churches have agreed upon one unified method of church government, whereby they will evidence their common faith in the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, then it may be easy in the matter of the practical vital interests of nations to get forty-four nations of varying degrees of culture, ideals, intelligence and morality to agree upon an effective world organization.

We might as well face facts. We have gained nothing by chasing rainbows. Mankind never advances except over the stony pathway of realities. When he does that he generally gets somewhere, but when he is seeking a pot of gold at the other end of an iridescent rainbow, he is apt to tumble into a morass.

The good God might have standardized man as Mr. Ford standardizes his famous flivver, but the Almighty did not do it. He has created forty-four or more nations, and many races, that range from the Australian bushmen to the most highly civilized race (whatever that is), races that have grouped themselves into nations for centuries and some for a thousand years, and in some cases four and five thousand years, and which, therefore, have all the pride and the ancestral influences of a thousand or five thousand years of history. These nations do not even agree upon what justice is, much less upon what international law is. Even if they did agree upon abstract justice, they would, nevertheless, not always agree as to what they would do or not do if a particular question arose, in which they felt that their vital interests conflicted with an accepted standard of justice. Nay, more—nations differ very widely in their sense of human solidarity, and especially in their sense of their responsibility for the peace of the world.

There never was a nobler or more promising organization of nations than the Hague Convention. Forty-four nations had on two great occasions met at the Hague. They had solemnly formulated great principles of international law; they had tried to create a conscience of mankind; they had appreciably stimulated it, and it seemed on July 31, 1914, as though the rays of perpetual peace from the sun of justice were about to bathe the earth. It seemed to us at that time impossible that any nation could be a firebrand, and yet the moment the war started how many of the Hague nations then considered that they had any responsibility to take any part in the war? If I do not forget, I think our own government—I say our own government, not people—proclaimed the lofty thought that in a supreme crisis of civilization it was our duty to remain neutral in word and deed and even in thought. With the exception of those nations whose vital practical interests were menaced, every nation incontinentally ran away; and if a European war broke out tomorrow between France and England on the one hand and Germany and Russia on the other, would not nearly every nation in the League of Nations, remembering the horrors of war, as incontinentally run away again as they did in 1914? I leave it to my friends of the United States Senate to say whether we could say with certainty that the United States would again enter into such a European conflict. Until there is a substantial unity of economic interests, plus a vital sense of human solidarity, of which there is at this hour little evidence, any attempt to build a League of Nations as a panacea for war is a mere illusion. Although in times of peace it may solve the questions about which nations would never go to

war anyway, yet the moment they are confronted with a crisis which involves, not a question of international law but the historic destiny of great peoples, that moment your League of Nations dissolves like the soap bubble with which a child plays.

These are not pleasant facts. I do not like to be the skeleton of the feast, but is there anything in present conditions that would show that they are too pessimistic?

CONDITIONS UNFAVORABLE TO WORLD ORGANIZATION

Far from there being at the present time a state of human society which would make practicable a world organization—please remember that I am speaking of a world organization, meaning thereby an organic body composed of all or substantially all of the nations of the world—it is I fear impossible under present conditions of thought. Far from there being at present favorable pre-disposing conditions, the conditions, on the contrary, are most unfavorable. I shall give you three that are peculiarly unfavorable, but before doing so let me refer for a moment, because it is an admirable illustration, to the oft repeated analogy of our Constitution of the United States. It has been often said in this League of Nations controversy, how simple a thing it was for our fathers to meet in Philadelphia and in four months to evolve a League of Nations which, barring one tremendous Civil War, has measurably kept the constituent states in peaceful relations with each other. The Constitution of the United States is proof of that which I am trying to say, that a world organization, like the Kingdom of God, comes not by observation. That is to say, it does not come except by a process of evolution from conditions which are above scraps of paper

or red seals or parchments or the academic formulae of statesmen.

The Constitution of the United States was an impossibility prior to 1787. William Penn had suggested it in 1693. Franklin had suggested it in 1754 and submitted a plan. In 1778 the Continental Congress had framed the Articles of Confederation—a rope of sand—but it was only when a people, who had already fought under one flag for seven years and who had been driven by the appealing distress of their condition to a recognition that there must be a stronger central government, that your Constitution became possible. In other words, your Constitution was possible when it reflected a condition and simply put into force great social forces that were independent of the wise men who met in the Constitutional Convention. It is a far more difficult task to weld together, not thirteen homogeneous states, as we then were, but forty-four nations of different races, and it becomes more difficult because at this hour, as I am about to attempt to show you, the conditions were never less favorable to the consummation of the great project.

I can not shut my eyes to the fact that there will survive as the ghastly heritage of the world war a most terrible vendetta between civilized nations which makes the formation of a world organization little better than an iridescent dream. It ought not to be so. I agree that it is an infinite misfortune that it is so, but the fact remains. For instance, Germany and Austria, crushed into a condition of economic servitude—the wreck of their former great selves whose peoples today bear the marks of the starvation of the great blockade—do you think as long as human nature is human nature that those two great historic peoples are going to feel in an amiable frame of

mind to their victors? And if they do not feel kindly, as they are dismembered and under the feet of the victors, what about France, what about England, what about the other nations, whose soil was ravaged, whose buildings were destroyed, whose youths were suffocated by poison gas, whose women and children were destroyed, killed like mice by bombs from airplanes? Do you think that harmony is going to result in our time, or until the second or third or fourth generation? If so, then your conception of human nature is very different from mine.

War does not start with the first sound of the cannon or end with the last. Our Civil War did not start with Sumter or end with Appomattox. It raged in the hearts of the American people for nearly fifteen years after. Over ravaged fields and from desolated homes, and over new made graves, North and South gazed at each other with a seemingly irreconcilable hatred, and it was only when, in 1876, each section was bidden to commemorate the common glories of the Republic, to meet here in Philadelphia, that measurably good terms between the sections began; and when in 1898, those who wore the blue and the gray fought side by side, then, indeed, came the real rapprochement between the North and the South. So that the mere magic of Grant's sword or of Meade's cannon could not bring peace between sections. Peace is a status of the heart. It is a condition of the mind, it is above the thunder of the cannon, it defies the point of the sword. Therefore, if peoples of a common destiny who had so many years been under a common flag, as the North and South, whose interests in every respect, except the one burning question of slavery, were so identical, took fifteen long years to forget the horrors of the war that was fought with a

reasonable degree of chivalry, what can you say of the most unspeakable war that the world has ever known, a war in which chivalry was thrown to the winds, a war in which non-combatants were not spared, a war which has left victor and vanquished in a common abyss of ruin, a war which has inflicted losses, from which for five hundred years none of the nations that were engaged in it, except, perhaps, our own, will wholly escape.

ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES IN WORLD ORGANIZATION

There is a second reason, and a more profound reason than many that have been suggested in discussions about the League of Nations. We generally assume that steam and electricity, working through the railroad and the steamship and the telegraph, are great peacemakers. They are simply a part of a great industrial evolution that has changed mankind more, within the lifetime of the oldest man, than in all the unaccounted centuries of the world from the days of the cave dweller, from the period when the polar cap was nearly down to the Pyrennes. In other words, in our time there has come a truly epochal change, and that epochal change has had two results, which do not make for this combination of nations. In the first place, it has caused an enormous increase in population. Europe, which in 1801 had about 150,000,000 inhabitants, today has 450,000,000 inhabitants, and that notwithstanding the fact that emigration, largely to America, has expanded our country from 3,000,000 to 110,000,000. Notwithstanding all that emigration, the enormous expansion has resulted from the domination of machinery over the soul of man. This has wholly changed the outlook of human society. Nations were self-sustaining before the indus-

trial civilization. For instance, England, with its less than ten millions of people, could feed itself. It did not need to turn itself into a great workshop. Germany could feed itself.

The United States, of course, was very largely self-sustaining before the railroad and steamship. All this is changed. Germany with its 70,000,000 people can not with its own resources sustain 40,000,000. What is to become of the other 30,000,000? Either they must emigrate, of which there is no possibility, or they must get the raw materials from some other parts of the world, manufacture them in the workshops and sell them in the markets. The same is true of England. England could not exist were it not for its power to import not merely raw materials for its mighty workshops but its foodstuffs as well; and even our own country, the most self-reliant country in the world, we too have reached a condition of dependence that it is impossible for 110,000,000 people to live in this country, prodigal as has been the bounty of Almighty God to us, unless we are able to export billions of the products of our fields and shops to other markets in the world.

That being so, with every nation thus dependent upon that which is without its borders, there has resulted a condition like a crowd in a theatre when the cry of fire is heard. At once everybody makes for the exits, and in the wild panic reason is largely forgotten. Today the world is in that state of an economic panic. In fact, the world war was probably, in the last analysis, the expression of that fear, the instinctive fear of great peoples, that unless some outside vent can be procured, not only for their products but even for their own lives, they will perish.

With a fierce struggle for world products and the ever diminishing quantities of raw materials, do you

think that there is a rosy prospect of a world combination? Do you think that men are going to arbitrate questions which are not questions that are called justiciable—a lawyer's phrase? On justiciable issues nations would not fight anyway. What they would fight about is the control of things that are vital to them. We think democracy makes for peace. We say in this great democratic age of ours how easy it is for men to come together, and just as the states of the Union are federated into one, so the forty-four nations, from Hedjaz and Uruguay and Patagonia up to England, France and Russia, can all be merged together in a corporation, compared to which the Standard Oil would be as nothing. Are all to be equal? The great nations will quite naturally not agree. How then will you distribute power? Will you say that that nation that has the biggest population shall be the greatest in the combination? Then China and India will each out-rank the United States about four times. If it be not by counting heads, is it area? Then Russia, that has one-fifth of the world, will have more influence than the United States and England and France and Germany put together. Or if it be not area, will it be wealth? Then our nation would have supremacy. But do you think that great historic nations, like France and England, would yield precedence to a nation simply because it had so many more dollars than they had?

No, the idea that you can get together a combination which will have some kind of a discrimination between nations is very nice in theory, but it does not work out in practice, for the reason that the nations at once are in disagreement as to which rank they should severally have. You can only have your world combination through human agencies. These human agen-

cies in a democratic age are necessarily restrained and confined in what they think best by the peoples whom they represent. We think that our President in Paris was unique in being handicapped by a Senate that did not agree with him. Why, he was not as handicapped as Lloyd George or Clemenceau. Why? Because Lloyd George never could be certain twenty-four hours when the knife of the parliamentary guillotine would fall on his neck. Let him displease the House of Commons and within twenty-four hours a vote of want of confidence could be passed and Lloyd George would have made his adieu to the great Council in Paris, so that always Lloyd George was looking over his shoulder at the mass of public opinion behind him, just as Mr. Wilson was obliged to look over his shoulder to the Senate of the United States and to the American people. I do not believe a world organization would function unless you would allow that to be done, which a democratic civilization would not permit, namely, to allow a few of the older statesmen of the world to be the organization with power to act. Because the moment that national representatives are obliged to look back and consult the peoples who have not accompanied them to the conference, that moment the most unwise decisions are often made, because everything becomes a compromise, and a compromise is generally a denial of justice, and there never is any peace where there is a denial of substantial justice.

But I refuse to believe that mankind is up a blind alley. I take comfort from a remark that one of the ablest of European statesmen, Jenescu, the great Roumanian, made during the conference when he was asked what he thought of it. He said, "Measured by the light of reason there is not a ray of light, but," he said, "I have faith in

man's inextinguishable impulse to live." I too have faith in man's "inextinguishable impulse to live," but I shall trust the instincts of men rather than the rhapsodies or academic formulae of statesmen. I believe that the instinct of peoples will slowly create the conditions out of which an organization can be ultimately effected—not in our time, not until there is the unity of conscience, of economic interests and a common sense of human solidarity, which at the present is non-existent.

In that task of leading the way, in the slow groping of mankind toward the light, I have faith, not in a world combination at the present hour, but in an entente between the great nations of common ideals, and with a reasonably common conscience. I recognize that the United States will be, within the lifetime of those now living, two hundred millions of people. The great British Empire will not cease. That weary Titan will carry its staggering load for many centuries more, and if only these two divisions of the English-speaking world can coöperate, a good foundation will be laid. To these can be added that land of heroic idealism, France; Italy too should be welcomed and the little nations which they have helped to create out of the welter of this war. Let us, in other words, not attempt to mingle the incongruous. There is and can be no real harmony between nations of lofty ideals and nations with base ideals. You might as well try to mix oil and water. Let the leading nations of equally cultural

standards, the nations with high and lofty ideals, let them have an entente, not an alliance, and let them work together in the most generous spirit of coöperation, and gradually the situation will get better.

The plague spots must be removed. For example, there will never be any peace in this world until the Russian problem is solved, and when we have solved that problem it ought to be then a part of America's destiny, with its capital and engineering skill, to help develop for a backward people the mighty resources of that nation—not to make a little sordid profit—no, but to help put Europe upon its feet economically, which is better than any so-called paper League of Nations. And that is not the only plague spot. China too must be rescued and re-established. This most pacific of all nations must not fall the helpless prey of any nation.

Slowly, man will go forward, and, when the conditions permit, then and not until then will come a world combination that will reflect a condition that makes it possible and without which it is impossible. Through the ages one increasing purpose does run "and the thoughts of men are broadened by the process of the suns." So I can but think that man is not up a blind alley, that if he is only patient, if he does not trust to the political empiricism that betrayed the world at Paris, if he will only have sanity of judgment and patience, then the United States will lead the world in the path of a perpetual peace.